

INTERIOR DESIGN

ATTRACTIVE DESIGN FOR PROPERTY INVESTING

AS PRESENTED BY GILL FIELDING



THE DESIGN GUIDE

Fielding
Financial

THE LEADING PROVIDER OF PROPERTY EDUCATION IN THE UK



WHERE TO FIND THE BEST IDEAS



TYPE OF PROPERTY



UNDERSTANDING YOUR CUSTOMER



USING COLOUR



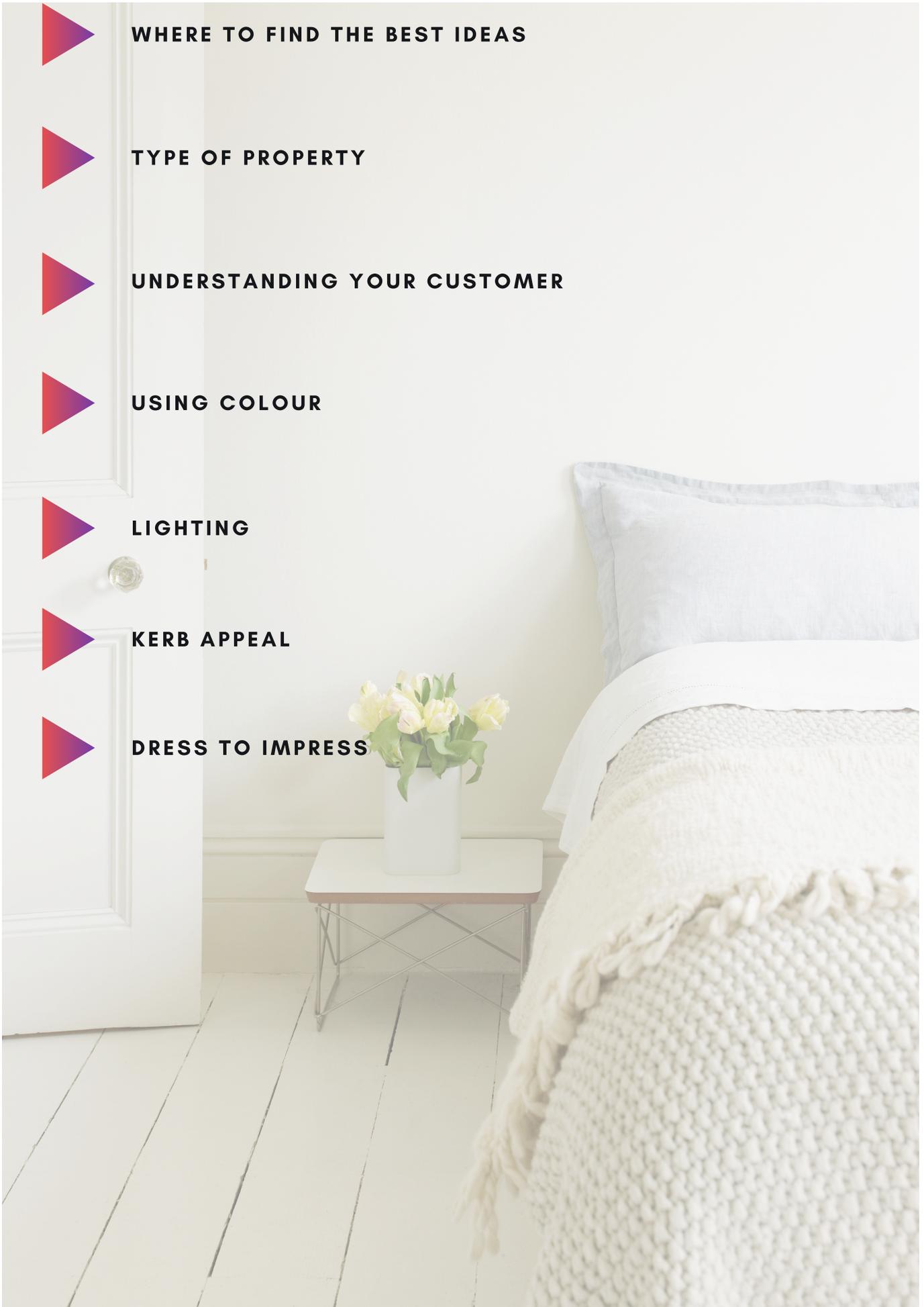
LIGHTING



KERB APPEAL



DRESS TO IMPRESS



When it comes to interior design, not everyone's budget is as big as their imagination. So, no matter what you're able to put in, here are the industry's best design tips for beautiful design while squeezing the most value out of your budget whilst bringing you the best possible returns.

Ultimately when designing you need to remember that this is not your home, it is a business. Do keep in mind that your taste may not be a universal so make sure you take your time to research the look. This will help its appeal and your pocket. At the end of a project you want to be able to look at it and want to live there yourself, however you do not want it to be so unique that you limit the prospective buyer/renter.

WHERE TO FIND THE BEST DESIGN IDEAS

There are several ways you can snag some great design ideas by using the resources already available to you. You can look at things like trade and architectural magazines, and you can find inspiration in the colours and textures in nature around you.

Here are some of my suggestions:

- Trade: The Bridge, KBB
- Architectural: Architects' Journal, Grand Designs
- Contemporary: Living Etc, Elle Decoration
- Traditional: Homes & Gardens,
- Mixed: Good Homes (mixed)
- Estate agents' free magazines

Design shows:

- 100% Design - Olympia, London (Sept)
- Grand Designs - Excel, London (May) & NEC Birmingham (Oct)
- KBB - NEC Birmingham (March)
- Top Drawer - Olympia, London (Jan & Sept)

Finally, you can find plenty of design online by visiting sites like:

- Pinterest - www.pinterest.com
- House and Garden - www.houseandgarden.co.uk
- Right Move - www.rightmove.co.uk
- Interior Designs - www.interiordesigns.net
- Google - images for interior home ideas

Be careful not to fall into the trap of being 'on trend'. Carpeted bathrooms and avocado suites were once on trend (if you can believe it!) so be cautious about what you choose to do; consider the longevity of it. Our tastes have changed drastically in the past 40 years, and we cannot predict the future, so keep it simple.



TYPES OF PROPERTY

Within our pyramids we could have anything from a small buy to let, a HMO, a capital refurbishment, serviced accommodation to a fancy pants deal. Each of these will require a different interior approach.

For those you are keeping your properties in your pyramid after refurbishment, I would recommend that you find a design that works well, and you replicate it. This formula allows your power team to action what you want quickly, and it also means that it is tried and tested product.

For those properties that you are flipping for capital you can keep it quite simple and generic i.e. white walls and plain flooring. If you are demanding a higher price point though, the quality of the finish must look expensive and luxurious. It will also have to be staged to sell it i.e. make it look like someone can move in without doing any more work to it.

When considering the interiors for your income properties consider the high wear and tear on the house. I would recommend staying clear of ceramic tiles on the floor for instance, if one is chipped then it is harder to replace. If you do choose to though, make sure that you have a supply of tiles spare so that you do not have to replace the whole floor for one bad tile.

It is a false economy to buy cheap products that you have to replace/fix often due to wear. Make sure you buy quality that will stand the test of your tenants.

Here are some simple tips for your different types of property:

Buy to let-

- Simple, light & easy to clean
- Neutral colours
- Ceiling - white matt emulsion
- Walls - 'Bright White' matt emulsion
- Flooring • Carpets for less than £6.99 per sqm
- Bathroom floor - Vinyl off-cut

HMOs-

- Kitchen requires two fridge freezers minimum, two hobs & oven.
- You may not be able to have a large dining table, consider having additional folding chairs to accommodate all tenants.
- All bedrooms should have a bed, cupboard, desk, chair and lamp
- En-suite all rooms where possible

Families with children-

- Preferably a WC at entry level
- Always include a separate bathroom with a bath
- Eat-in kitchen
- Staircase suitable for safety gate

Holiday let-

- Hotel quality beds with memory foam top
- TV & DVD Player
- Air conditioning or fan
- Crisp linen
- Soft towels (preferably beige)
- Coffee machine



PROPERTY TYPE



UNDERSTAND WHO YOUR CUSTOMER IS

Customers come in all different forms. You've got students, families, and even corporate clients, all with their own unique requirements. One of the main things to consider is the budget of the customer. This will help you design a place that ticks all the boxes.

Students are more interested in having their own space, so try to add an en-suite to each bedroom.

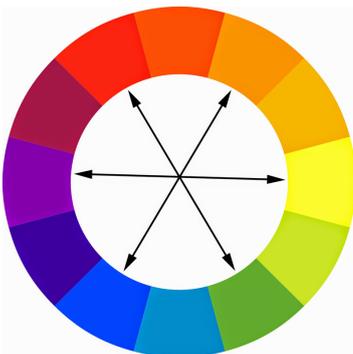
Corporate clients, on the other hand, are all about luxury. Large spaces with expensive looking furniture is the way to go.

Space is great for families too. It allows them room to grow and store all the toys and other items they'll build up over time.

USING COLOUR

Colour will form part of the first impression for those viewing your property online/ exploring in person. It is an extremely personal choice, so I recommend having a neutral colour palette as your base and adding the wow factor with feature walls and accessories. Should it then become outdated it is relatively easy and cheap to replace as it is localised.

Being flexible also allows you to market your property to its fullest potential. If your property is light grey, like all other properties available, change it up and you may find your bookings increase as you now stand out amongst the crowd. It may also allow you to charge a higher premium.



The colour wheel is extremely important to reference, know the colours that work well together. It is also good to view the colours that are opposite on the wheel. This opposite colour can be used for your accessories, allowing for a pop of interest. I would recommend that you keep a colour theme throughout the property. If you have gone through the rainbow on your tour around the property you may give the viewer a headache!

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF COLOUR-

When you are choosing your feature colour, is good to keep in mind how these colours will make a person feel.

- ▶ **RED** - danger passion, energy, warmth, adventure, optimism.
BEST FOR: dining rooms as it promotes sociable & lively feelings and stimulates appetite.
TIP: it can be overpowering and lead to headaches. Either vary the shade, paint one wall red, or use it for accessories only.
- ▶ **YELLOW** - sunshine & energy, stimulates the intellect
BEST FOR: Kitchens, dining rooms, north facing rooms.
TIP: Not restful for a bedroom. Thought to enhance feelings of distress
- ▶ **GREEN** - nature, energy, calming, restful, balance (halfway between red & blue), security, stability
BEST FOR: Kitchens, Bedrooms, living rooms
- ▶ **PURPLE** - creativity, fertility, joy but also magic, evil, death & sex Best
FOR: Kitchens, Bedrooms.
TIP: can be overpowering
- ▶ **BROWN** - security, stability, very practical
BEST FOR: Kitchens, living rooms.
TIP: introduce a livelier colour for mental stimulation
- ▶ **BLACK** - drama, eccentricity, death. Non-colour that absorbs colour & reflects nothing back Best
FOR: Kitchens, Use in moderation.
TIP: don't use as a base colour, only as an anchor for other colours that need grounding such as pink

TIP: WHEN YOU DO PAINT, USE WIPEABLE MATT AND SPECIFIC KITCHEN AND BATHROOM PAINT. THIS WILL MAKE UPKEEP EASIER.



HOW TO LIGHT YOUR PROPERTY

After considering the paint colour, flooring and furniture, do not forget how important lighting can be. For your income properties especially, you are going to have tenants/customers using the space daily, so you need to make sure it is functional as well as pretty.

1 MAKE A LIGHTING PLAN

If you're starting from scratch or redecorating a room, create a mini brief or lighting plan that tackles the essentials. Think about what activities take place in each room (eating, relaxing, working), key features of a room you want to highlight and what architectural boundaries you may need to consider. Take into account style, scale and output and even colour temperature of lights before you go rushing into design decisions. Early planning makes for less headaches and rushed last minute decisions.

2 LAYER YOUR LIGHTING

Take a layered approach to lighting with different light sources across different levels to create ambience and interest in a room. Use lighting to make the most of a room's size and shape - uplighting makes a room feel larger, low hung pendants will create an illusion of height and clusters of lighting make large rooms seem cosier.

3 MAKE SURE THE LIGHTING IS HELPFUL

Consider what tasks you may be undertaking in each room where lighting can affect or aid you. Cooking requires more concentrated lighting, therefore a combination of bright downlights and recess lighting, in cabinets and above stove tops, is useful. For reading, flexible and directional lighting aimed away from you is better. Powder rooms require a combination of sidelights and downlights. Dimmers will quickly become your new best friend, providing an energy efficient and effective way to quickly change the atmosphere and warmth of a room.

4 CHOOSE THE BULB CAREFULLY

The bulbs you choose should be more than an afterthought, racing through the supermarket when you realise they've blown. You should consider the following:

- How bright do you need your space (watts)?
- What atmosphere are you trying to achieve (colour temperature, e.g. lower temp is more similar to candlelight, while higher temps are more akin to a blue sky outside)
- Should energy efficiency be considered (for more frequently used lights)
- Are you trying to make a design or focal statement (with scale, shape or colours)?

5 USE SPOTLIGHTS TO HIGHLIGHT YOUR FAVOURITES

Use lighting to subtly (or not so subtly) focus on a feature wall, architectural element or key possession (like your mahogany leather sofa or winged armchair). Wall mounted lights symmetrically arranged on either side of a statement mirror above the mantelpiece of a fireplace will add warmth, sophistication and elegance to a room.

6 LIGHT THE WAY AT NIGHT

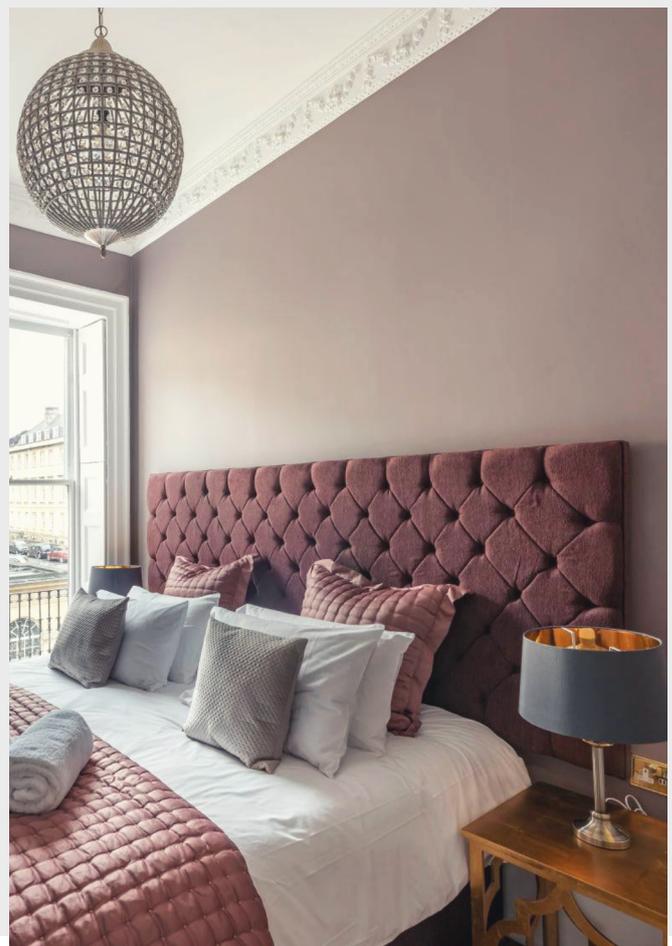
Midnight bathroom breaks are made worse with harsh lighting that causes temporary blindness upon flicking a switch. Invest in directional floor level lighting in hallways, staircases and the bathroom to create subtle warmth and a guide. A cheaper alternative will be adding a dimmer switch to avoid night time glare.

7 LESS IS MORE

Keep theme, colour schemes and material finishes consistent throughout the home, especially when it comes to lighting. Too many different styles in a sordid array throughout the home can be confusing on the eye and will cause uneasiness. Neutral, lighter tones will open up a space and make it appear larger, statement pops of colour (e.g. through lampshades) will add interest, while darker hues add a touch of luxury and cosiness. Keep it simple and consistent.

8 MAKE YOUR GUESTS FEEL WELCOME

Spotlights work well pointed at the centre of a dining table to draw people in.



IT'S ALL ABOUT THE KERB APPEAL

Before a potential buyer sees the inside of the property they have to be won over by the outside. You have to entice them to walk through the door. Smart buyers tend to view a property at different times of the day to see what the area is like, so you'll want to make sure your property reflects in a positive light.

Little things go a long way. Ensure the garden is tidy and appealing, even if there isn't much of it. Trim the bushes and cut the grass. Repainting window frames and oiling the gate so it doesn't squeak gives the viewer a positive feeling about the rest of the property, too.

FROM STREET TO REAR GARDEN:

1. Door Number - light it so you can see it from a car & at night
2. Easy access gate
3. Remove 'Beware of Dog' sign!
4. Weed the front garden, trim hedge, clean the windows & hide bins!
5. Repaint window frames, clean/paint sills
6. Shelter & light over front entrance
7. Door colours • Green - Welcoming, sharing, generosity • White - Cleanliness • Brown - Solidity, security, roots • Blue - Cold • Red - Least favourite
8. Doorbell or knocker - visible & working

DRESS TO IMPRESS

For most, it's hard to imagine living somewhere when all they see is an empty room, so it's wise to include furniture and accessories where relevant.

Remember you're not selling your own home, you're selling a house. Don't go overboard.

You can save money by hiring larger pieces instead of buying them outright. For instance, beds, sofas and dining room tables are cheaper to hire than they are to purchase.

Pictures and soft furnishings add warmth to a place and make it seem more appealing to a potential buyer, and adding plants are a great way to give life to the property, too.

With wealth, health and happiness,

Gene Fielding